



## Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

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### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 7:00 PM

This meeting was held remotely, via ZOOM.

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman P. Bassermann
- 2) **ROLL CALL:** Chairman P. Bassermann, Commissioners D. Gocłowski, M. Ormrod, C. Begemann, M. Papantones, R. Mirsky. Also present was IW Director J. Frederick and IW Associate K. Blanchette
- 3) **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**
  - a) March 13, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes-Commissioner D. Gocłowski made a motion to approve the minutes of March 13, 2025. Commissioner M. Papantones seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- 4) **OTHER BUSINESS:**
  - a) IW#23.05.02 | 35 Bayberry Lane | room addition where deck exists and second floor addition over existing garage
    - i) Permit modification request to allow room addition to extend and addition 3' (~50 SF increase)-Plan was originally approved in 2023 to permit a building addition where a deck used to be located. After completing the first phase of the project (an accessory apartment over existing garage), the homeowner realized the proposed addition would not be adequate for her intended purpose and is therefore requesting the size of the addition to be an additional 50 sq. ft. Commission discussed the uniqueness of this site as the wetland area is a historically maintained lawn and is not a typical wetland. Commissioner D. Gocłowski made a motion to approve the revised plan as presented, with the original permit conditions still in force. Commissioner R. Mirsky seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- 5) **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
  - a) IW#25.01.01 | 19-37 Gould Lane | Proposed Subdivision for 3 Residential Lots- Chairman P. Bassermann opened the public hearing and discussed the procedures for the public hearing. Ronald Wassmer, PE was present for the applicant and provided an overview of the current conditions of the site and the wetlands as delineated by William Kenny, Soil Scientist. They are proposing 3 residential lots, and one additional lot that will be deeded as open space to the Branford Land Trust. Mr. Wassmer indicated that there is no direct or indirect impact proposed to the wetlands, and the houses will be located 57.8 ft (Lot 1), and 37 feet (Lot 3) from the wetlands and the home on Lot 2 does not even fall within the 100' upland review area. They are proposing a split rail fence placed 15 feet from the wetlands with wetland signage to prevent future encroachment into the wetland area, as well as proposed wetland enhancement plantings. The areas where grading will occur is already gently sloped, therefore not much grading will be required on site. Infiltration gallies are proposed on site to manage roof drainage and runoff. The current flow of water on site drains

to the North, under Gould Ln, where it then enters a culvert under I-95, where it enters a watercourse which eventually empties into the Branford River. Matt Popp, Soil and Wetland Scientist, was also present for the applicant, and gave an overview of his observations of the wetland. He indicated that the wetland complex is classified as a swamp since there is standing water. There was no species indicated in the area that are deemed to be a species of concern. While there, he noted that “peepers” were present, red shoulder hawk as well as other various birds, and evidence of white-tailed deer in the area. He had some recommendations for the development, which included dense vegetation downstream of discharge points/level spreaders, shade trees along the street to reduce the heat impacts of the asphalt, removal of the burning bush at ground level 2x per year, he also recommended adding spice bush, northern bayberry, and possibly Amelanchier to the planting plan. He agrees with the idea of putting up a split rail fence 15 ft from the wetland to aid in the prevention of activity within the wetland areas. The commission had questions regarding the construction of the houses on the lots, and whether there would be one developer for all 3 lots, or if the lots are being sold individually. Mr. Wassmer indicated that it is not yet determined if there will be one developer for the sites or if the lots will be sold individually and the purchasers can bring in their own builder. The Commission requested some revisions to the site plans, to add stockpile locations with silt fences, and tables showing the acreage of each lot, along with square footage of activities in the upland areas and wetlands for each individual lot. The hearing was then opened to the public for comment.

Brian Murray, Beechwood Rd-has seen multiple types of wildlife using that site and is concerned that their paths would be affected by the development. He also has concerns about drainage, as the pipe under 95 has clogged before and caused back up in his backyard.

Patricia Esposito, Beechwood Rd-also concerned about drainage and the storm drain that is located right in front of the proposed driveway for Lot 3.

Josh Guthrie, Wellsweep Rd-Concerned about fact that his home is still on septic and concerned that the drainage will have an effect on his leaching fields.

Sam Pappas, Acorn Rd-also had concerns about the wildlife that uses that site.

Allan Barthelemy, Wellsweep Rd-believes the applicant is vastly underestimating the amount of water within the wetland system onsite, indicated standing water often goes over Gould Lane and seeps up through the asphalt on Wellsweep Rd and with the increase in rainfall over the years is concerned of flooding. He also indicated that the area was a breeding ground for wood ducks.

Mr. Wassmer, PE, made note of the comments and concerns of the residents, and will have responses to the concerns at the continuation of the public hearing.

The public hearing was continued to the April 10 meeting. It was noted if materials were not ready in time the public hearing may be continued to the April 24 meeting. The April 10 meeting agenda will indicate whether the item is tabled.

## 6) APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW:

- a) IW#25.02.01 | 301 Maple St | Renovations to yard space within 100' of watercourse-Jim Galligan from Nafis and Young indicated the revisions that were included on the latest submissions, including the concrete driveway on Swift St, identified trees that were going to be cut down and stumps left in place, and a planting plan utilizing plants from the DEEP website recommendations. There was some discussion on whether the number of plants proposed would be adequate for the

area that needed to be planted. Upon reviewing the dimensions of the area, the applicant proposed increasing the number of New Jersey Tea plants from 8 to 20 and the Butterfly Weed from 8 to 16. Commission felt that was suitable to the amount of area where plantings need to be. The commission also requested that it be indicated on the plans that natural mulch was to be used. Commissioner M. Ormrod made a motion to approve the application with the possible conditions from the staff report added as conditions of approval, with item #2 amended that there will be 2 additional trees that will be cut and the additional plantings added (20 New Jersey Tea and 16 Butterfly Weed) along with the standard conditions and general provisions of all permits. Commissioner C. Begemann requested a friendly amendment to add that natural mulch is to be used. Commissioner M. Ormrod accepted the friendly amendment. Commissioner C. Begemann seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**7) ENFORCEMENT:**

- a) Notice of Violation | 301 Maple St | removal of vegetation without a permit- Commission determined that with the approval of the application for regulated activity, this NOV is closed.
- b) CC#24.09.01 & NOV | 9 High Plains Rd & 40 Hickory Hill La | regrading resulting in sedimentation of the pond located on property known as 40 Hickory Hill Lane
  - i) Continuation of Show cause hearing- Commission reviewed letter from George Logan, Soil Scientist, that indicated the silt has not resuspended and there is nothing further that needs to be done. Commissioner P. Bassermann made a motion to lift the CC order based upon the letter. Commissioner C. Begemann seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- c) CC#24.06.01 | 38 Howard Ave | retaining wall & associated activities
  - i) Update regarding plantings/timeframe for compliance
    - (1) **TABLED** until update is available, no discussion

**8) APPLICATIONS FOR RECEIPT:**

- a) BRIW#25.03.01 | 45-81 Short Rocks Rd (Supply Ponds) | Construct a 530' hiking trail along North Chestnut Street to Lower Supply Pond
- b) IW#25.03.02 | 101 Hotchkiss Grove Rd-(The Ponds) | Removal and replacement of failing timber retaining wall.

**9) AGENT APPROVALS:** none

**10) CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- a) Supply Ponds Public Information Meeting April 1, 2025 – IWWA application will be submitted after plans are more finalized
- b) 9 Totoket Road-Scheer Pond-DEEP Aquatic Pesticide application -no comments
- c) CT Bar Association Land Use Webinar Re-cap-It was very well attended and the commission felt it was very informative.

**11) ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman P. Bassermann adjourned the meeting at 9:46 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katy Blanchette